

# Hybrid sovereignty and the state of exception in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon

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DOI:

[10.1080/24694452.2016.1270189](https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2016.1270189)

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*Document Version*

Peer reviewed version

*Citation for published version (Harvard):*

Ramadan, A & Fregonese, S 2017, 'Hybrid sovereignty and the state of exception in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon', *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, vol. 107, no. 4, pp. 949-963.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/24694452.2016.1270189>

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Checked for eligibility: 03/11/2016.

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## **HYBRID SOVEREIGNTY AND THE STATE OF EXCEPTION IN THE PALESTINIAN REFUGEE CAMPS IN LEBANON**

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## Abstract

This article traces a genealogy of sovereignty and exception in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon that highlights their mutual connections and contaminations with the mechanisms of Lebanese state sovereignty from 1948 onwards. Drawing together two theoretical approaches emerging from the work of Giorgio Agamben and recent political geographical work on sovereignty, we explore the refugee camps as spaces of exception characterized by hybrid sovereignties. Drawing on original fieldwork, we trace the evolution of the relationship of exception and its mutual links with the production of hybridity in Lebanon's sovereignty from 1948 until today, focusing particularly on the key period from 1968 to 1982 when Palestinian militancy led to a formal recognition of Palestinian autonomy in the camps. Rather than simply undermining Lebanon's sovereignty, the camps' fragmented security and territoriality have instead reshaped Lebanon's state sovereignty in complex ways, and forged hybrid spaces for refugee political agency to emerge.

## Keywords

*Hybrid Sovereignty*

*Lebanon*

*Palestinian refugees*

*Refugee camps*

*State of Exception*

## Introduction

In this article, we trace a genealogy of sovereignty and exception in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon. To understand the historical political geographies of these camps, we highlight their mutual connections with the workings of state sovereignty in Lebanon since 1948. In doing so, we bring together two critical theoretical arguments to explore the camps as *spaces of exception* characterized by *hybrid sovereignties*. Drawing on the political philosophy of Giorgio Agamben, many recent accounts see refugee camps and asylum seeker detention centers as a spatial manifestation of the state of exception, spaces placed outside the law by the sovereign, within which refugees are stripped of political life. However, the sovereign state, with exclusive authority and a monopoly of legitimate violence within its borders, simply does not exist in Lebanon. A generalized model of the camp as a space of exception, where the law is suspended by a singular all-powerful sovereign, fails to make sense of the complex and hybrid forms of sovereignty in Lebanon. Established diplomatic approaches depict Lebanon as a ‘weak state’, whose sovereignty is compromised by nonstate actors and external interference by other states. Instead, as Fregonese (2012a, 2012b) has argued, Lebanon’s particular postcolonial governmentality has produced *hybrid* arrangements of sovereignty between the state and a range of non-state actors and armed groups. Widening this hybrid perspective on sovereignty to address the relationship between the state and the camp in Lebanon, this article argues that the Palestinian camps are exceptions that should be understood as part of Lebanon’s already multifarious landscape of fractured and hybrid sovereignties.

Established academic and popular discourses have defined Palestinian refugee camps as exceptional spaces that undermine Lebanon’s sovereignty – as ‘extra-territorial’ entities (Agier

2011), 'security islands' (Suleiman 1999), a 'state-within-a-state' (Sayigh 1997, 21), 'spaces of exception' (Ramadan 2009b). Building on and complicating these approaches, we argue that the camps' fragmented security and territoriality (re)arrangements through almost seventy years of existence have always contaminated and reshaped state sovereignty in complex ways. By tracing the interplay between camp governance and security structures and the Lebanese state since 1948, we complicate the binary between norm and exception, revealing a more complex realm of hybrid sovereignty arrangements of which the camps are part, and whose spatial histories require further investigation. Focusing on how the relation of exception has changed through time, we offer a genealogical reading of camp sovereignty in Lebanon as hybrid, where state and non-state actors at different times have competed or collaborated to control refugee camps and those dwelling within them.

Sovereignty practices shaped by both state and non-state actors are by no means unique to Lebanon. Political geographical research has exposed the sovereign practices 'at work beyond the state-centered bureaucratic, elitist, disembodied realms' (Lunstrum 2013, 9) in diverse contexts, from government in exile (McConnell 2009) to the management of protest (Fregonese 2013) and of post-conflict societies (Koopman 2011). By bringing together in a new way two sets of scholarly work – one on camps and the state of exception, and the other on hybrid sovereignty – through this substantial empirical case, we trace the ways in which the state of exception emerges, but also transforms and fragments over time, as part of broader sovereignty (re)arrangements encompassing state and non-state.

In the next section of the article, we consider critically Giorgio Agamben's key conceptualization of the state of exception, in the context of the Palestinian camps in Lebanon. Building on critical political geographies of state sovereignty (Sidaway 2003; Agnew 2009; McConnell 2009, 2010), we place the camps within a broader landscape of hybrid sovereignties in Lebanon. This hybridity places Lebanon's governance beyond the normative narrative of the 'weak state' that has long shaped Lebanon's political economy. In the third section, we trace a genealogy of the changing arrangements of sovereignty in the camps, and their mutual influence with the wider sovereignty landscape of Lebanon. We focus on four key periods, from the years of increasingly repressive state intervention in the spatial regulation and security of the camps through the 1950s and 1960s, the rise of the Palestinian political and militant movements and consequent loss of state authority in the camps in 1969, the years of the Palestinian 'Revolution' from 1970, and finally the years of Palestinian marginalization after 1982 and the end of the civil war in 1990. Not simply spaces of bare life, or insecure zones eroding Lebanese sovereignty, the Palestinian camps of Lebanon are hybrid spaces of political possibility, defined by a series of 'cross-contamination[s] of different state and nonstate actors' (Fregonese 2012b, 658), within which particular kinds of refugee political agency have emerged, disappeared and transformed over time.

As we have argued elsewhere, arguments about refugee camps as spaces of exception *must* emerge from thoroughly empirical and grounded engagements with such spaces (Ramadan 2013). This article draws on nine periods of fieldwork in Beirut, Sidon, and the Palestinian camps of Beddawi, Burj Barajneh, Burj Shemali, El Buss, Mar Elias, Nahr el-Bared, Rashidieh and Shatila, conducted between 2002 and 2010. Around 200 interviews conducted with refugee

camp residents, civil and political representatives of Palestinian organizations, Lebanese politicians, former militia fighters, activists, humanitarian workers and journalists, covered the broad situation of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon, the relationships between camps and Lebanon, and the regulation of sovereignty and territorial control.

### Sovereignty and exception in Lebanon

The work of Giorgio Agamben (1998, 2005) on sovereign power, bare life and the state of exception has been hugely influential for recent work on refugees and camps. At the heart of Agamben's political philosophy lie the camp, as a spatial manifestation of the state of exception, and the figure of *homo sacer*, a body stripped of political life. Drawing on the work of Carl Schmitt, for whom sovereignty is defined by the ability to step outside and suspend the law in a state of exception, Agamben argues that 'the inclusion of bare life in the political realm ... constitutes the original – if concealed – nucleus of sovereign power' (1998: 6).

The space of the camp, specifically the *concentration camp*, represents the culmination of the logic of modern politics, for Agamben. This camp is the absolute space of the exception, where the 'temporary suspension of the rule of law on the basis of a factual state of danger, is now given a permanent spatial arrangement' (Agamben 1998, 168-9). It is a space *taken outside* the legal order that is nevertheless integral to the political order of modernity: nothing less than 'the hidden matrix of the political space in which we live' (Agamben 2000, x). Those interned by the sovereign in the camp are stripped of their rights and political existence, excluded from the protections of the law, and reduced to 'bare life' (see also Minca 2006; Giaccaria and Minca 2011). There is a 'perfectly real filiation', for Agamben (2000, 21), between refugee camps,

internment camps, concentration camps and extermination camps: spaces in which the normal order is suspended, and those interred within are reduced to bare life by the biopolitical interventions of sovereign power. So too do totalitarian and democratic regimes exist on a continuum: the figure of the refugee demonstrates that the supposedly inalienable 'rights of man' are applicable only inasmuch as man appears as a *citizen*, and the sovereign can at any moment cast out any person from the political order (Agamben 1998, 126–135, following Arendt 1943, 1979, 299).

Nevertheless, in possessing only bare life and being cast out of political life, the refugee represents a 'disquieting element' to the international order of states, nations and citizens. There cannot be an autonomous space within this order for a pure human non-citizen (Agamben 2000, 19), so refugees are included in that order through a separate international regime of humanitarianism: 'a space of exception set apart from the common world but still under control' (Agier 2011, 147). Humanitarian organizations 'can only grasp human life in the figure of bare or sacred life, and therefore, despite themselves, maintain a secret solidarity with the very powers they ought to fight' (Agamben 1998, 133-4).

This language of camps and bare life has proven appealing to scholars seeking to understand the often violent and precarious lives of refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants (Edkins 2000; Edkins and Pin-Fat 2005; Turner 2005; Papastergiadis 2006). However, a sustained critique has emerged of Agamben's work, and particularly about the ways some have put those ideas to use (Owens 2009). An analysis of refugees as silenced and disempowered *homines sacri*, while potentially powerful, cannot offer an effective theoretical understanding



of political agency on the part of refugees themselves. Furthermore the space of exception as a universal model of camps risks missing out more complex sovereignty arrangements in refugee camps (Ramadan 2013). If camps *are* spaces of exception, that suspension of the law can be as much through the ‘absence or weakness’ of sovereign state power, as its intensification (Elden 2009, 61).

In this article we offer a reading of camp sovereignty in Lebanon as *hybrid*, where state and non-state actors at different times competed or collaborated to control refugee camps and those dwelling within them. In Lebanon, non-state actors *are* de-facto practitioners of territoriality and sovereignty, and further hybrid political formations exist *between* the state and the non-state: ‘they are not the state but resemble it, collaborate with it, or overpower it’ (Fregonese 2012b, 661). We offer a grounded, empirically informed account of the changing sovereign arrangements over Palestinian refugee camps since their establishment from 1948, a genealogy of the exception through which we can make historical sense of the lack of control over camps today. With a theoretical openness to seeing state sovereignty as something less than absolute, we consider the Palestinian camps as part of a broader terrain of fractured and ‘hybrid’ sovereignties that place Lebanon’s governance beyond the normative narrative of the ‘weak state’ (Fregonese 2012b).

### Lebanon: from weakness to hybridity

The notion of the ‘weak’ state has developed within literature in comparative politics, development economics, and International Relations (Kaplan 2008) and, since the ‘war on terror’, within security discourse and conflict studies (Carment, Prest, and Samy 2010, 9).

Lebanon fits the normative definition of a weak state: one with a low capacity 'to develop and implement policies in order to provide collective goods such as security, order, and welfare to its citizens in a legitimate and effective manner untrammelled by internal or external actors' (Paul 2010, 5), and without control over its whole territory (Kassab 2015). Particularly since the 2006 war between Hizbullah and Israel, mainstream IR literature has focused on the erosion of Lebanon's internal sovereignty by illegitimate non-state actors, particularly Hizbullah (see e.g. Gal-Or 2008; Pan 2006; Shalom 2009). Unsurprisingly, such approaches see sovereignty as an achievable condition of absolute state authority over a territory, and where this is lacking it must be strengthened.

The idea of strengthening Lebanon's sovereignty has been at the basis of international policy towards Lebanon in the twenty-first century. UN Security Council resolution 1559 (2004), for example, is an emblematic attempt to reinstate state sovereignty by calling for 'the disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias; ... [and] the extension of the control of the Government of Lebanon over all Lebanese territory'. Between 2006 and 2007, the USA gave substantial military aid to Lebanon in order to strengthen state sovereignty over Hizbullah controlled areas, and to aid in the 2007 battle to control Nahr el-Bared refugee camp (see Ramadan 2009b). More recently, the UK's 'Backing stability' programme has sought to protect Lebanon's territorial integrity through *teichopolitical* measures like walls, watchtowers and other barriers (Rosière and Jones 2012) aimed at hardening the border with Syria against a spillover of conflict from there, especially in the form of ISIS militants. These interventions are typical of recent international approaches to sovereignty and the preservation of international

order, which have sought to strengthen and preserve the territorial integrity of states, like Lebanon, deemed fragile and at risk of failure.

However, a narrative of Lebanon as a weak state has been present since the era of the French colonial mandate. After independence in 1943, Lebanon's consociational democracy has often been described as resting on a fragile balance of power between its religious communities. One of the main intellectuals of Lebanese nationalism, Michel Chiha, described the compromise of power between religious communities, as a 'necessary' flaw needed to keep the country's religious and political diversity under control and avoid deeper divisions (Salam 2001). Similar metaphors of weakness were elaborated amidst independent Lebanon's economic development in the 1950s and 1960s (Fregonese 2012b). Historically, the Lebanese state has not had full control of its whole territory, nor a monopoly of legitimate violence. Social and political allegiances often follow lines of family and confessional connections, while the presence of irregular and semi-regular armed groups have often been tolerated by the state (Khalaf 2002; Salibi 2003; Hanf 2015).

Today, the largest and most important of these groups is Hizbullah, which is both a political party and an armed movement. Hizbullah is 'simultaneously part of the state, nonstate, and state-like' (Fregonese 2012b, 668), controlling large areas of South Beirut, South Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley, where it has provided infrastructural and social services since the end of the civil war and especially after Israel's 2006 military campaign in south Lebanon (Flanigan and Abdel-Samad 2009; Wiegand 2009; Heger and Jung 2015). To confront Hizbullah, and extend control over these territories, is beyond the capabilities of the Lebanese state, and previous

attempts to do so have resulted in violent conflict (Fregonese 2012b). Instead, the state has largely tolerated Hizbullah's role as a self-declared Islamic resistance movement, as it has historically tolerated other groups who practice political violence and control territory within Lebanon's borders. Such sovereign anomalies are the products of complex interactions between state actors and non-state groups that have developed specific spaces and practices throughout modern Lebanon's political history. These interactions, and the hybrid political formations that can result, make any binary opposition between state and non-state, legitimate and irregular violence, limiting for understanding sovereignty in Lebanon (Fregonese 2012b).

Sovereignty is defined as the nation-state's monopoly over 'the legitimate use of violence within its territory' (Biersteker and Weber 1996b, 14) and the protection of the population within that territory against outside threats (Agnew 2009). This perfect hypothetical notion of sovereignty is the measure against which Lebanon is deemed to fall short as a 'weak' state. However, sovereignty as a constructed process resulting from 'knowledgeable practices by human agents, including citizens, non-citizens, theorists, and diplomats' (Biersteker and Weber 1996b, 18), and the many disconnections between de jure and de facto sovereignty (Sidaway 2003; McConnell 2009; Mavroudi 2010), have long been debated in political sciences (Biersteker and Weber 1996a; Clapham 1998; Krasner 1999) and political geography (Agnew 2009; McConnell 2010; Mountz 2013). Despite these critiques, many contributions in political science still assume a 'totalizing concept of sovereignty [...] as the sole, basic and universal term for describing political power and community' (Jennings 2011, 25), conceiving sovereignty as 'a necessary feature of political life: the very possibility of political action, political order, and political protection seems to depend upon it' (Brown 2010, 54). Similarly, a 'silent statism' (Ince

and Barrera de la Torre 2016, 10) remains engrained in much political geography. While political geographers have recognised the multiplicity of actors negotiating sovereignty and territoriality alongside the state, particularly in postcolonial settings where ‘the enduring binary logic’ of strong western versus weak postcolonial states must be transcended (Sidaway 2003, 174), few contributions have effectively complicated the distinction between state and non-state domains. Building on geographical notions of hybridity as a mixing and transgression of ontological binaries (Whatmore 2006), the ‘hybrid sovereignty’ (Fregonese 2012b) perspective challenges the very discreteness of these categories, and the ethical and political bases of this distinction, by focusing on the overlaps, the cross-contaminations and collaborations between them. In so doing, it calls into question those discursive ‘structures of legitimacy’ (Gregory 2006, 100) that confine non-state actors to an ethico-political realm with which state politics should not (officially) engage. This approach is essential for understanding the political geographies of Lebanon (Hourani 2013; Nagel and Staeheli 2015; Stel 2015).

In the case of Palestinian camps in Lebanon, the hybrid sovereignty approach casts new light on questions of security, territorial control and sovereignty, between humanitarian institutions, state agencies and Palestinian political and militant actors. In such a situation of multifarious territorialities, contested sovereignty and periodical dysfunctionality of the government, a straightforward reading of the camps as spaces of exception is overly simplistic. As Ramadan (2009b, 157) argues ‘the case of Lebanon must stretch to breaking point these ideas of a deliberate suspension of the rule of law by the sovereign, when the Lebanese state is unable to exercise sovereignty over large portions of its own territory’. In seeing sovereignty as hybrid, we break out of a dualistic framing of sovereignty as either monopolized by the state or lacking.

Instead, we can see the suspension of the law in the space of exception as a *hybrid* act, taken by and between state and other actors. This analysis is open to the political potential of camps – not spaces of exception outside of politics, but hybrid spaces of political possibility where the political acts and practices of the camps have mingled with and impacted on Lebanon’s state sovereignty in important ways.

### Recasting exception through hybridity: genealogies of sovereignty in the Palestinian refugee camps

Exile has been a difficult experience for Palestinian refugees and for Lebanon itself. With its diverse population of 18 recognized religious groups, bound together by a confessional political system that divides power along confessional lines, Lebanon was ill prepared for the influx of mostly Sunni Muslim Palestinians in 1948. Today, Lebanon is host to around 455,000 Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA. These are the survivors and descendants of the 100,000 Palestinians who crossed into Lebanon in 1948. In total, around three-quarters of a million Palestinians became refugees in that first Arab-Israeli war. Many of the Palestinian urban upper and middle classes settled in Lebanese cities, especially in Beirut’s newer neighborhoods like Ras Beirut, and Tariq Jdid in the south of the city. Most Christian Palestinians were granted Lebanese citizenship and settled in more traditionally Christian areas of Beirut like Ayn al Rummana and Furn al Shebbak (Husseini 1994). However, the large majority of refugees were Muslims from rural northern Palestine, who settled in sixteen refugee camps (four were destroyed in conflict in the 1970s) across the country, mostly clustered around the edges of Beirut, the northern city of Tripoli, and the southern cities of Sidon and Tyre.

Marginalizing Palestinian refugees in camps, and resisting all forms of integration and normalization, has been the state's response to this challenge. The Lebanese government has consistently sought to maintain the transience of the Palestinian presence through intense restrictions on construction in the camps, on Palestinian access to the labor markets, property rights, and relief, education and social services. Abandoned by the state, responsibility for Palestinian refugees instead falls to UNRWA.<sup>1</sup> UNRWA has many state-like functions, including registering births and deaths, and in Lebanon alone it currently operates 69 schools, 27 clinics and provides relief to over 61,000 special hardship cases. Transferring responsibility for refugees to a 'surrogate state' role performed by UN agencies is not unique to Lebanon, but widespread across the Middle East (Kagan 2011, 1; see also Takkenberg 1998). As Talhami (2003, 147) remarks, 'UNRWA has been placed in charge of keeping alive the bulk of the dismembered Palestinian nation as if it were a quasi-state, or a state within a state'. Such humanitarian 'assistance has been presented to Palestinians as a substitute for their rights' (Weighill 1997, 294–5).

The twelve official Palestinian refugee camps are among many spaces in which the Lebanese state lacks sovereignty. While UNRWA's mandate is strictly non-political, Palestinian camps have also long been attractive bases for militant groups, national liberation movements and their associated political organizations. These groups exercise power and governance in camps alongside UNRWA and seek to mobilize refugees to fight for their homeland. Since the Cairo Agreement of 1969, to be discussed in the next section, Lebanese police and security forces have conventionally not entered the camps to enforce the law. In the absence of a single Lebanese sovereign who suspends the rule of law, in Agamben's terms, these multiple

Palestinian and international groups and institutions all participate in sovereign practices and contribute to the suspension of the normal legal order (Hanafi and Long 2010; Ramadan 2009b, 2013). This situation has not emerged from nowhere, and in this section we outline the series of historical shifts that created the present situation: a genealogy of changing camp sovereignties.

### 1948-1967: state control

The first decade after displacement was one of abject Palestinian weakness, as peasants dispossessed and expelled from their land began to rebuild their lives in the camps. In Lebanon, this decade coincided with concerted intervention by the state into the administration and regulation of the Palestinian camps, alongside UNRWA. 1950 saw the creation of the *Central Committee for Refugee Affairs* which in 1959 became a Directorate within the Lebanese Ministry of Interior, working in close coordination with UNRWA (Roberts 2010, 78). It focused on aid, health, housing, personal status and education of the camp population, as well as regulating refugees' mobility between camps, and negotiating with the owners of the land where camps had been set up. In 1950s Beirut, there were clear demarcations between the camps and the city,<sup>2</sup> but over subsequent decades, camps like Burj al-Barajneh and Shatila were engulfed as the city grew (Martin 2015).

Security and order in the camps involved close collaboration between camp leaders and the Lebanese state, but while this might seem like the work of a strong state imposing itself in the camps, this decade saw the state's near or actual loss of control on security in the country at large. In 1952, the first major political crisis since independence resulted in a bloodless coup. In



1958, amidst high political and sectarian tensions, the country was plunged into an even greater crisis, this time with an armed uprising with international involvement.<sup>3</sup> With Fouad Chehab elected as the new President at the end of the 1958 clashes, a new era of support for geopolitical neutrality – neither openly pro-Western nor pan-Arabist – inter-communal cooperation and social reforms began (El-Khazen 2000).

As the second decade of Palestinian presence in Lebanon began, Chehab's focus on neutrality and stability translated into increased political control by state authorities in the camps. The *Deuxième Bureau*, the Lebanese army intelligence section, was present in every camp, working alongside the Lebanese police, the Directorate of Refugee Affairs, and UNRWA-designated camp leaders. The *Bureau* sought to suppress all forms of Palestinian political activity and organization, vetting UNRWA employees and appointments, recruiting spies and informants in the camps, and intimidating, arresting, beating and even torturing activists in some cases (Sayigh 1977, 1994, 69–70). State repression extended further, materialized in the built environment of the camp and its shelters: '[r]oofs were not allowed, cement was prohibited material, cartographic boundaries were rigorously enforced' (Abourahme 2015, 207).<sup>4</sup> These state activities – 'nearly a decade of intimidation and extortion' (Sayigh 1994, 68) – produced deep resentment among the Palestinian population:

Before 1970, when the PLO came to Lebanon, the Lebanese army was in the camps. If any person just threw water in the streets, the government would give you a fine. They don't like Palestinian people. They were very hard on us before.

- Interview with Palestinian female, 61, Rashidieh camp, October 2008

[Palestinians suffered] complete humiliation by Lebanese governments and intelligence during the 1950s and 1960s. They were torturing Palestinians and considered us like Red Indians. This was one of the main reasons the Palestinian camps revolted, because we were completely humiliated and persecuted by the Lebanese government. I was a child and remember them arresting and torturing our fathers, especially the Lebanese intelligence.

- Interview with Palestinian male, age 50, Nahr el-Bared camp, November 2007

Palestinian political hopes in this period largely rested with the pan-Arab nationalism of Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser and his followers. Nasserism sought to unite the Arab peoples, and liberate Palestine militarily. In Lebanon, the Nasserist-influenced Arab National Movement united Arab nationalists and intellectuals from Lebanese and Palestinian circles. But with the defeat of the Arab armies, led by Nasser, by Israel in the Six Day War of 1967, the focus of political organization and Palestinian political hopes began to change. A number of groups seeking a Palestinian armed revolution had emerged and grown in the late 1950s and 60s. In the aftermath of the Arab humiliation of 1967, a 1968 military raid against Israel by Palestinian fighters near the Jordanian village of al-Karama (meaning dignity) captured the imagination and provided the 'foundation myth' of the Palestinian commando movement (Khalidi 1997, 196). In February 1969, the largest of these groups – *Fatah*, headed by Yasser Arafat – emerged to lead the Palestine Liberation Organization, a diplomatic and political apparatus initially established by the Arab League. The focus of Palestinian political activities and hopes shifted from the Arab states to the emergent revolutionary armed struggle movement. In this, there was a generational shift too: the younger generation of Palestinians born in exile tended to be more radicalized and less willing to trust in the Arab states to resolve their situation.

### 1968-1970: Palestinian autonomy

The years 1968-1970 saw the relationship between Lebanese hosts and Palestinian guests change entirely and irreversibly. The rise of Palestinian armed movements led to a fundamental change in the structure and organization of Palestinian camps across Lebanon, with the gradual loss of state authority inside the camps and the passage of decisional and organizational power to the PLO and affiliated organizations. Palestinian armed movements began operating in south Lebanon in 1968, launching raids across the border into Israel that resulted in escalating clashes with the Israeli army in the south. These clashes culminated in an Israeli military operation in December 1968 against Beirut International Airport, where commandos destroyed thirteen civilian aircraft belonging to the Lebanese national carrier Middle East Airlines. This attack was a warning to the Lebanese government to take control of the Palestinian movements on its territory, but within Lebanon sustained pressure grew on the government to allow Palestinian resistance movements to organize and operate on Lebanese territory. This pressure came from Palestinians in the camps, from Palestinian armed forces in the south, against whom the Lebanese army tried unsuccessfully to exert control in October 1969, and from parts of Lebanese society and the political scene sympathetic to the Palestinian cause – particularly the Arab national movements, students, Muslims and leftists.

On 23 April 1969, a march organized by Lebanese progressive parties and Palestinian organizations, in solidarity with the Palestinian fighters in the south, was attended by as many as 12,000 people, and was suppressed violently by Lebanese security forces. According to El-Khazen (2000, 142), this confrontation was instigated by *Fatah*, with the intention to provoke a crisis and bring the issue of Palestinian resistance into the open. There was clear coordination in

this between the Palestinian movements and several leftist Lebanese political parties and movements. El-Khazen (2000, 149-150) explains that Lebanese Sunni and Christian leaders diverged on the Palestinian question, with the former arguing for state coordination (*tansiq*) with Palestinian guerrillas, and the latter seeing coordination as a violation of Lebanese sovereignty. The ensuing deadlock and disagreement over the Palestinian question brought down the government of prime minister Rashid Karami, who had only held the position since his predecessor, Abdallah Yafi, resigned in the aftermath of the Israeli attack on Beirut airport four months earlier (Hanf 2015, 160–170).

In the same period, further decisive actions took place in the camps themselves. Here, ordinary Palestinians confronted and refused to cooperate with Lebanese security forces and the hated Deuxième Bureau, and some took up arms to defend the camps alongside the armed groups. In his strikingly detailed personal narrative of everyday life as a refugee, Jamal Krayem Kanj (2010) reports a landmark event in the sovereignty relationship between the camps and the state. On 28 August 1969, a police enquiry into illegal construction in Nahr el-Bared camp in northern Lebanon uncovered a conscription office for *Fatah's* armed wing *Al-Asifah*, and resulted in the arrest and interrogation of a Palestinian militant, Abu Atif. Widespread protest spread across the camp and quickly escalated into clashes between police and camp residents, who stormed the police station as police evacuated. Kanj writes: 'I was ecstatic to be inside the same structure that used to instill fear in me just by looking at it or even passing it by on the road. The building was the center of intimidation, humiliation and horror in the camp' (2010, 67-68). The main road connecting Northern Lebanon to Syria was cut off by protesters, who overturned and set fire to an army truck. When the army attempted to enter the camp by force, they were

quickly pushed back by residents armed with weapons seized from the police station, and a ceasefire was declared in the evening. In negotiations that followed, the Lebanese army agreed to withdraw from the camp. News of events spread quickly, and by the end of September, all the camps had contested and expelled the police and *Deuxième Bureau* offices and forces, and in their place the PLO deployed its own armed security force, *Al-Kifah al-Musallah al-Filastini* (the Palestinian Armed Struggle). These events are remembered as the *intifada* of the camps – an uprising against oppression by Lebanese state security. They were also, most importantly, the trigger for a fundamental rearrangement of sovereignty and of the relation of exception between the camp and the state.

Until today, there remains deep resentment in the camps about that period of Lebanese rule brought to an end in 1969. This uprising is explained directly by the unjust oppression Palestinians suffered under Lebanese rule. Another interviewee described:

‘[the] very severe and racial ... discrimination, racial treatment and abuses that the Deuxième Bureau practiced inside the camps. ... Palestinians couldn’t visit another camp without a permission from the Security, the Lebanese Security. ... Two or three Palestinians couldn’t meet and talk together inside the camp – ‘what are you talking about?’ So the result of this very inhumane treatment led to what Palestinians called the *intifada* of the camps.

- Interview with Palestinian male, age 38, Sidon, December 2007

As this political crisis grew, so did pressure from the Arab states for Lebanon to allow Palestinian fighters to operate freely in Lebanese territory. These pressures led to the Cairo

Agreement, secretly brokered by Egypt's President Nasser and signed by Emile Bustani, head of the Lebanese army, and Yasser Arafat, head of the PLO, in November 1969. The Cairo Agreement was *the* key moment in the renegotiation of the relationship between the camps and the Lebanese state. It gave Palestinians freedom to move, reside and work across Lebanon, legitimized and regulated the presence and activities of Palestinian guerrilla movements in Lebanon, and formalized the autonomy of the camps under the rule of the PLO and *Al-Kifah al-Musallah*. The agreement emphasized that the autonomous Palestinian presence was to operate 'in cooperation with the local Lebanese authorities' (section 1.2) and 'in accordance with the principles of the sovereignty and security of Lebanon' (section 1.4). The agreement reaffirmed the Lebanese authorities 'shall continue to exercise all their prerogatives and responsibilities in all areas of Lebanon in all circumstances' (section 2.13). But the agreement included no mechanisms of enforcement, and in legitimizing Palestinian control of the camps, *de facto* sovereignty was sacrificed by the state and gained by the PLO (El-Khazen 2000, 162). The provision for PLO representatives to be based at Lebanese army headquarters, in order to resolve disputes (section 2.7), further highlights the contamination of state by non-state domains, and the hybrid nature of sovereign control.

The camps therefore became – in an official way – part of a parallel Palestinian political order. This hybrid formula of Palestinian autonomy under Lebanese sovereignty contained the camps within the order of Lebanese sovereignty through their exception from that order. The Cairo Agreement represents a declaration of a state of exception, excepting (in the sense of taking outside, *ex-capere*) the camps and the Palestinian movements from the normal order and law. The agreement formalized the suspension of law in the camps through the *de facto* recognition

of the PLO as a sovereign actor who, in turn, claimed to recognize overall Lebanese sovereignty (but in practice rarely did). Sovereignty was therefore turned in on itself, fractured and hybridized. This agreement between a (sovereign?) state and the supposedly bare lives of stateless refugees demonstrates the limits of any formulaic reading of the camps as spaces of exception. The exception existed, but its formulation, declaration and reproduction were hybrid acts. Such an agreement was unprecedented:

‘In no country other than Lebanon, and in no regional order other than that of the Arab state system, would an agreement that derives its legitimacy from writing off part of the country’s national sovereignty be possible. It was an agreement by which a country relinquished part of its prerogatives and delegated authority over part of its land to external parties engaged in war with another country to help diffuse an internal political crisis.’ (El-Khazen 2000, 161)

### **1970-1982: Palestinian Revolution and the collapse of the state**

The era of the Palestinian Revolution was an intense and fraught one, where growing Palestinian militant activity ‘exacerbated the contradictions of the Lebanese system’ (Brynen 1989, 50), made Lebanon increasingly unstable, and blurred the boundaries of sovereignty and security between the camps and the outside. In September 1970, civil war erupted in Jordan between the state and Palestinian guerrilla movements, due to precisely the same tensions between the former’s demand for sovereignty and the latter’s demand for autonomy in fighting Israel. The PLO leadership and guerrillas were defeated and expelled. Turki (1988, 132) describes how, in winter 1971, remnants of Palestinian forces from Jordan began to arrive and regroup ‘in the most barren areas in the south [of Lebanon], by Mt. Hermon, as well as in the

Bekaa Valley to the east'. Despite obviously coordinated attacks between the Lebanese and Israeli Armies against these guerrillas (Ibid.), Lebanon soon became the hub and headquarters of the PLO and the Palestinian Resistance Movement. This era of the Revolution in Lebanon lasted until 1982, and saw the reorganization of Palestinian society, and a cultural and political renaissance. It was during these years that the PLO was granted observer status at the United Nations, and Arafat addressed the General Assembly. This was a moment of renewed pride and optimism, as Palestinian refugees became active resisters and national liberation fighters instead of passive victims, and took control of their own lives for the first time:

The Cairo Agreement was firstly to facilitate the military work of the *fedayeen* [revolutionary fighters] in the south, and secondly to manage our own local authorities in the camps. We became responsible for our own discipline and security in the camps ... At first it was good because it was organized by a military constitution, the *Kifah al-Musallah* – armed struggle. Its headquarters were in Beirut and it was one of the PLO institutions. After 1969, the PLO made many institutions: the Red Crescent, refugee responsables [sic], education responsables. They tried to organize into departments and ministries, as a government. As for security, they could arrest, accuse and imprison anyone. It was good at first, the problems were less and things worked well with the Popular Committees.

- Interview with Palestinian male, age 76, Nahr el-Bared camp, November 2007.

The PLO was able to build up a huge power base in Lebanon, controlling the camps officially, and well beyond the boundaries of the camps unofficially. The southeastern Arkoub district, where guerrilla activities were focused, became known as '*Fatah* Land' (Khalaf 2002, 217), and the PLO functioned effectively as a 'state-within-a-state' (Sayigh 1997, 21). This 'mini-state'



employed as many as 65% of the Palestinian workforce, and offered free medical services, education subsidies and camp infrastructure (Sayigh 1994, 213). Palestinian movements cultivated alliances with Lebanese parties within and outside government, which gave the latter access to both financial patronage and arms supplies from the PLO and their sponsors (Hanf 2015, 169). Armed raids by Palestinian groups against Israel resulted in repeated Israeli military interventions in Lebanon, and Lebanese civilians in the south – many of whom had supported and joined the Palestinian movements initially – were increasingly caught in the crossfire. Attempts by the Lebanese army to rein in Palestinian groups resulted in further clashes in 1973. In one such episode in April 1973, Lebanese National Movement militias fought alongside Palestinians against the army, which was bombarding the camps around Beirut (Turki 1988, 133). Even the Lebanese army became divided, with commander Ahmad Khatib threatening to shoot soldiers if they fired at Palestinians; Khatib and his troops later did split from the army command in the first year of the civil war (Ibid.). Christian groups like the Lebanese *Kata'ib* (Phalanges) recruited and armed their own irregular militia forces, with some collaboration from army officers. Through these events, there was further hybridization between non-state and state actors, with the Palestinian question further polarizing and dividing Lebanon.

While much of the Palestinian leadership was based in Beirut, it was events in the southern city of Sidon that accelerated Lebanon's descent into civil war. In February 1975, a dispute over fishing rights with former president Camille Chamoun resulted in the assassination of Marouf Saad, the city's Nasserist former mayor and one of its most influential politicians. Saad had long been close to the Palestinian refugee community in Sidon's two refugee camps, but had been involved in a long struggle with Palestinian movements for control of local politics. The

Palestinian militias *Saiqa* and *Fatah* opened offices in the city, outside the Palestinian camps, and after clashing with Saad's *Tanzīm al Quwwah al Sha'biya fī Sayda* (Organization of the Popular Force in Sidon), the Palestinians briefly kidnapped Saad in 1970. But after Saad's shooting in 1975, Palestinian forces and Saad supporters together shut down the city by blocking the coastal road and setting up checkpoints, and clashes with Lebanese security forces went on for four days (see El-Khazen 2000, 268). Through this episode, the domains of state and non-state were thoroughly blurred. The Palestinian camps were the locus of militant activity that became bound up with Lebanese urban politics, the non-state Palestinian groups at times clashing then allying with the hybrid private militia of a Lebanese politician, who together clashed with the state army and asserted territorial control over the city.

Just weeks later, in April 1975, the civil war began and drew in the Palestinian armed forces on the side of their allies in the Lebanese National Movement. The civil war saw further hybridizations between state and non-state actors, with elements of the government, army and armed militias contesting and at times collaborating to control territory and infrastructure. The various Palestinian armed groups were participants in this, fighting against and alongside different Lebanese movements at different times, as well as continuing armed actions against Israel. In the first two years of the war, *Kata'ib* and allied militias besieged and destroyed the Palestinian camps in East Beirut – Karantina, Dikwaneh, Jisr el-Basha and Tel al-Zaatar – resulting in several thousand dead and renewed displacement for those who survived (Yassin 2010). In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon, occupied Beirut and put the PLO under siege. With the negotiated evacuation of the PLO leadership and fighters from Beirut, under international supervision, the era of the Palestinian Revolution was over.

### After 1982: from autonomy to ambiguity

From this point, the Palestinian gains of the late 1960s and early 1970s were reversed. One of the first acts of the post-Revolution era, after the surrender of the PLO leaders in 1982, was the massacre of Palestinian civilians in Sabra and Shatila camps by Lebanese Christian militia, allied to Israel and in an area under overall Israeli military control (Fisk 2001, 359–400). The PLO structures and forces that had controlled and protected the camps were gone, and Palestinians became reliant again on UNRWA rations (Sayigh 1994, 213). With Syrian influence in Lebanon growing through the mid-1980s, camps remaining loyal to the PLO in Beirut and the south were put under renewed siege by the Syrian-backed Lebanese Shi'a militia Amal (see Sayigh 1994), while Syrian-backed Palestinian factions took control of the camps in the north:<sup>5</sup>

From 1984, there was no *Kifah al-Musallah*. Other organizations drove out Fatah from the camp, and the new organizations were allied with Syria, which made the Popular Committee very weak. Above all was Syrian intelligence, and their resources were all from Syria. Anyone making problems were arrested by Syrian forces in Lebanon or sent to Damascus, to the dim and dark prisons of Damascus. After 1984 until 2000, there was no security committee, no kind of disciplinary structure or problem solving except the Popular Committee, and they were very weak. The situation was very anxious, the government could arrest people leaving the camp. Syrians, Lebanese, they all tried to terrify us.

- Interview with Palestinian male, age 76, Nahr el-Bared camp, November 2007.

In 1987, the wartime Lebanese government officially abrogated the Cairo Agreement, ending official recognition of the PLO presence and role in managing the camps. Since the end of the

civil war in 1990-1, the Palestinian camps have faced decades of marginalization, insecurity and at times instability.

Today, the legacies of the era of the Palestinian Revolution are many, and the current status of the camps is still shaped by that period. While armed struggle against Israel is no longer active in Lebanon, the camps are still filled with symbols of the Revolution, and slogans promoting struggle, resistance and solidarity with the Palestinian national movement (Ramadan 2009a). While the Cairo Agreement is no longer in force, Lebanese military and police still do not enter the camps to enforce Lebanese sovereignty and rule of law. What has changed is that neither the PLO nor anyone else is recognized as responsible for the camps. The camps are simply treated as 'extraterritorial' spaces— outside the state's sphere of control and responsibility, present absences:

We have the expression 'security islands'. This expresses the functional rule of the Palestinian camps this country agreed to in the Cairo Agreement. The Palestinian organizations are the authority inside the camps. But the Lebanese government withdrew from this agreement, but still accepted camps as security islands. Now [there is] no representation, the government doesn't consider any Palestinian organizations as representatives and responsible. After withdrawing from the Cairo Agreement, the camps were considered 'extra territory': they don't recognize anyone inside as responsible. [...] I believe Lebanon needed this, so that the state wouldn't be responsible for the camps, their welfare and security, and they don't recognize others as responsible.

- Interview with Lebanese journalist, Beirut, November 2007.

This ambiguity is central to the governance structures of the camps today. The Cairo Agreement no longer applies, but de facto the camps remain autonomous – surrounded by Lebanese control but abandoned within. Several of the camps have Lebanese army checkpoints at their entrances, where people and goods going in and out are monitored. Entering Rashidieh camp, in the far south of Lebanon, illustrates this shift in sovereign control:

Turning off the main road between Tyre and Naqoura to enter Rashidieh camp, we cross a border. First, our car is stopped by Lebanese soldiers. They check our identity documents; we are foreigners so they check our names against a list of foreigners with permission to enter. They check inside the car, they check the back, and then we are waved through. Our car trundles 100 meters along a potholed concrete no man's land. We pass between Palestinian flags, faces of dead Palestinian fighters, 'martyrs' of Fatah, and under an archway bearing nationalist slogans and a photograph of Yasser Arafat. We stop by a small concrete building; a man in military fatigues carrying a Kalashnikov checks our papers again, asks who we are and why we are there. We are waved through, past more flags, boards and posters for Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hamas, the PLF, the PFLP, UNRWA, the DFLP, then Fatah, and into the camp.

- Research diary, July 2003.

In the absence of state control, power and governance inside the camps are exercised by a combination of Palestinian and international institutions. UNRWA administers the camps and the refugee population, providing services and relief, a 'phantom sovereign' (Hanafi 2008, 91) without political mandate; Palestinian political factions, form political and popular committees, and provide security and policing; Islamist groups, religious leaders and local and international

NGOs all also exercise power within the camps. These groups overlap, compete and often conflict, but together control the camps and those living within them:

UNRWA has no authority over people in the camps. Authority is for the local authorities: first the Popular Committee, and second, [senior] faction leaders in the area. But the main local authority is the Popular Committees. Since the civil war in Lebanon, there have been no police stations in the camps – the [Lebanese authorities] deal just with the Popular Committees in the camps. UNRWA's responsibility is to give services and give help to people safely and justly, but if there are security problems they do not interfere.

- Interview with Palestinian male, retired UNRWA employee, age 76, Badawi camp,  
November 2007

Today, the camps are spaces not of one sovereign who can suspend the rule of law, in Agamben's terms, but of multiple partially sovereign actors who all contribute to the suspension of the laws and the state of exception (Hanafi and Long 2010; Ramadan 2009b, 2013). Crucially, this suspension of law does not equate to total *lawlessness*. Despite no longer recognizing any alternative authority in the camps, the Lebanese authorities continue to talk formally with PLO and UNRWA representatives in Lebanon, and informally with camp popular committees. Suleiman (1999) argues that Lebanese law *is* enforced through such coordination with Palestinian groups (see Abou-Zaki 2013). But this is precisely the point: the law is enforced not by the state but through a hybrid arrangement between the Lebanese authorities and Palestinian (non-)authorities. This is the nature of the state of exception in the camps today.

Palestinians' bitter experiences during the civil war make many reluctant for this situation to change. Four camps were completely destroyed and depopulated during the war, while others were put under military siege for years at a time. Most recently, in 2007, Nahr el-Bared camp was destroyed in a four month conflict (see Ramadan 2009b, 2010):

'The camps are vulnerable, you know. [In] the period of 30 years, so many camps have been destroyed and some of them were also destroyed under the eyes of the army and the government, and nobody has moved to protect the Palestinians. And the Sabra and Shatila massacres took place under international – not only local – *international* eyes and international presence. This doesn't mean if you have arms or a kind of authority inside the camp, that it has to be against the Lebanese or it has to lessen Lebanese sovereignty. This kind of autonomy shouldn't contradict or oppose Lebanese sovereignty and authority.'

- Interview with Palestinian male, age 38, Sidon, December 2007

This claim that Palestinian autonomy should not deny Lebanese sovereignty is the contradiction at the heart of the sovereign arrangements over the camps. Palestinian autonomy, framed by the Cairo Agreement that is no more, inevitably challenges and undermines any conventional notion of state sovereignty. Just as in the years of the Revolution and the Cairo Agreement, it cannot be any other way. Whether it is the recognized, formalized rule of the PLO in the camps or today's reality of a security vacuum, the state does not enforce its rule in the camps. That is an ongoing legacy of the uprising of the camps in 1969, and the rise and fall of Palestinian political and military power in Lebanon.

## Conclusion

Today, Lebanon is at the heart of a new refugee crisis. Of the 4.8 million refugees to date (17 August 2016) who have fled the war in Syria since 2011, at least 1.1 million (and probably far more) have sought refuge in Lebanon. Together, Syrian and Palestinian refugees number the equivalent of one third of Lebanon's own population. The Lebanese government has refused to set up camps for Syrians, and relations between Lebanese communities and Syrian refugees have frequently been characterized by tensions and hostility. This Lebanese response to the current Syrian refugee crisis has been profoundly shaped by its experiences of the Palestinian one: the Palestinian refugees were never able to return and, over decades, their camps became sources of insecurity and instability for Lebanon.

The Palestinian refugee camps of Lebanon have been crucial arenas in which Lebanese state sovereignty has been asserted, contested, contaminated, shared and lost. In this article, we have traced the shifting arrangements of sovereignty over the camps, from the state control of the 1950s, through the state repression of the 1960s, the uprising of the camps in 1969 led by Palestinian militant groups that resulted in the Cairo Agreement, the years of the Palestinian Revolution between 1970 and 1982, and the state abandonment since the abrogation of the Cairo Agreement in 1987 and the end of the civil war in 1990. Throughout these different eras, the state of exception has been characterized not by a binary opposition between bare life and the sovereign, but rather by *hybrid* arrangements of sovereignty between the state, international humanitarian organizations, and Palestinian political and militant groups. Even as these relations of power and governance have changed from one era to the next, hybridity has prevailed throughout. There is no single sovereign: not the state, nor UNRWA, nor the PLO.



Control of the camps and those refugees who dwell within their boundaries has always involved combinations and collaborations of control. While the camps are characterized by particular arrangements of control, this hybridity is in keeping with the nature of sovereignty in Lebanon more widely, where the state does not fully control its own territory, and rules through calculated collaboration with, and tolerance of, non-state and quasi-state actors. Through interactions and alliances with Lebanese parties, Palestinian leaders and militias were part of Lebanon's hybrid sovereignties beyond the camps too – evident in the April 1969 events that brought down the Karami premiership, the April 1973 clashes that divided the army, and the March 1975 shut down of Sidon, all discussed above.

For decades, the camps have been active arenas of political organization and struggle through which Palestinians have resisted their marginalization and their exile, both in military and more mundane ways. The first decade of abject Palestinian weakness, the second decade of political oppression by state authorities, the uprising of 1969 that secured Palestinian autonomy, and the armed Revolution for national liberation that was anchored in refugee camps across the country, but transcended their boundaries. The era of the Palestinian Revolution was one of political organization, cultural renaissance and militant activity. The peasants became revolutionaries, as Rosemary Sayigh (2007) memorably put it. Through this time, Palestinian political agency was transformed, manifested and performed in myriad ways, not only through participation in armed struggle, but also the everyday acts that supported it: the cooking and cleaning, bringing up children, maintaining traditions, telling stories and singing songs that reproduced a *Palestinian* people in exile who demanded the right to return to their homeland (Ramadan 2013). But while Palestinian movements gained great power in Lebanon, and in so

doing widened a great schism in Lebanese politics through the late 1960s and the 1970s, they did not succeed in liberating their homeland. The Palestinian Revolution, that era of Palestinian political empowerment between 1970 and 1982, ended in violence and defeat through the long civil war that tore their host state apart.

Today, Palestinians in the camps are marginalized and impoverished, but they largely retain autonomy. The Cairo Agreement is no longer in force, yet its spirit remains. The camps are spaces not of intensified sovereign power but of sovereign *abandonment*, and the suspension of law is achieved not by the state but in its *absence*. This void is filled with an alternative Palestinian order that produces distinct values and subjectivities, contributes to the suspension of the law, controls its conditions, and shares in practices of sovereignty and governance. Through this partial sovereignty, in a state of multiple partial, hybrid and overlapping sovereignties, this Palestinian order still has the capacity to produce its own political life: something more than the depoliticized humanitarianism of international agencies, and something less than the citizenship of a state (Ramadan 2013). Yet the security of permanence, of home, remains elusive until today. Lacking a recognized state in a world of states, lacking secure status, title and representation, Palestinian life and presence are as contingent as their liminal politics – from Lebanon to Palestine itself.

The Palestinian refugee camps of Lebanon today have been, to different degrees and at different stages, infrastructures for human survival managed by international humanitarian interventions, spaces of repressive state control, platforms for militant mobilization and armed struggle, and islands of insecurity abandoned by the state. None of these statuses has ever

been absolute, and in attending to the *hybrid* nature of sovereignty, this article has cast light on the myriad political acts and spatial practices through which security, territorial control and sovereignty in the camps have been articulated, challenged and reworked. Rejecting a formulaic reading of the camps as spaces outside of politics, this article has traced a genealogy of the state of exception that reveals how shifting arrangements of sovereignty underpinned the camps as hybrid spaces of political possibility.

## Notes

1. While the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) performs this humanitarian role for most refugees, Palestinians fall under the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). While this has meant a higher per capita spend for Palestinians than other refugees, the UNRWA regime is lacking in significant ways. UNHCR is mandated to offer international protection to refugees and seek durable solutions for refugee status, but these functions fall outside UNRWA's mandate. Palestinian refugees therefore suffer a 'protection gap' (Akram 2002).

2. Interview with Burj Al Barajneh popular committee, April 2002.

3. From 1956, President Chamoun pursued pro-Western liberal capitalist policies that exacerbated inequalities, especially in Beirut's Muslim majority areas. These inequalities 'became all the more acute as the regional conflict between Arab nationalism and Western foreign policy now began to infiltrate local politics' (Kassir 2010, 453). Meanwhile, the US Cold War strategy of containment focused on Mediterranean states that they considered at risk of falling under Soviet or Nasserist influence. The events of 1958 led to US military intervention – the first application of the Eisenhower doctrine (Little 2001) – to quell the uprising and preventing socialist/Nasserist forces from tipping the power balance.

4. Later, when the camps gained autonomy, this was again manifested in the building of more durable housing. Abourahme (2015, 208) cites Khoury (2006, 357): 'From the tent to the concrete room roofed with canvas, to the corrugated iron roof, to the 'roof of the revolution' –

she had to wait twenty years until '68 to get a concrete roof. The concrete roof came with the revolution and the *fedayeen*.'

5. Syrian forces first intervened in the Lebanese civil war in 1976 to prevent the PLO from overthrowing the Lebanese state; Syrian forces remained in Lebanon until 2005. As well as having troops on the ground, Syria sponsored and supported various Palestinian and Lebanese factions and parties throughout this time.

## Acknowledgments

We are grateful to three reviewers for their comments, which have helped significantly improve this article since its original submission, and to Nik Heynen for his encouragement and guidance through the review process.

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